Reservation of lower berth for old people

5231. SHRI S. M. LAL JAN BASHA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a demand to make available lower berths in all reserved compartments for the old and handicapped ;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Railways have made any such effort to help the elderly passengers;

(d) is so, the full details thereof; and

(e) the steps proposed to help the old and handicapped passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA) : (a) to (e) Demands are received from time to time to make available lower berths for old and handicapped persons in reserved compartments.

There is already a provision in the computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) to provide lower berths automatically to male passengers of 60 years and above and female passengers of 45 years and above subject to availability of accommodation at the time of booking. In addition, instructions also exist for allotment of lower berths falling vacant in the train due to non-turning up of passengers, to senior citizens and physically handicapped passengers by Train Conductor/TTE on first-come-first served basis. A reservation quota of 2 Sleeper class berths which includes one lower berth has also been earmarked in all trains running on non-suburban sections for physically handicapped persons performing their journeys on handicapped concessional ticket.

Fastest train between Mumbai and Goa

5232. SHRI LALIT SURI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to introduce the fastest train in the country between Mumbai and Goa, that would run at the maximum speed of 150 kmph;

(b) if so, whether fencing along the track on the route, wherever necessary would be erected before the train is actually started; and

(c) if so, the cost involved in the track fencing and by when the same is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Fencing has already been erected at all such locations where cattle are likely to approach the track at the approximate cost of Rs. 2.2 crores.

AC-3 Tier coach in Madurai-Jammutawi Express

5233. SHRI S.S. CHANDRAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have any plan to introduce AC-3 Tier coach in the Madurai-Jammutawi Express to cater the need of the travelling public; and

(b) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) and (b) Provision of AC-3-Tier coaches in long distance overnight trains is an ongoing process subject to traffic pattern, operational feasibility and availability of resources.

Linking of Jaisalmer and Barmer

5234. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU) : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the progress of work for construction of 170 km of railway line linking Jaisalmer and Barmer in Rajasthan;

(b) financial allocation on this project:

(c) whether the Railway Board has framed any time schedule for the completion of the work; and

(d) if so, by when the entire project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA) : (a) to (d) A survey for construction of rail line between Jaisalmer and Barmer (170 km) in Rajasthan has been sanctioned at a cost of Rs. 22.95 lakh. Preliminary arrangements are being made to take up the survey. The survey is likely to be completed by March, 2004.

New trains from Rajasthan

5235. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU) : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) details of new passenger trains contemplated to commence from Rajasthan to other places of the country;

(b) whether there has been any shift from the original plan;

(c) if so, the details thereof, train-wise;